

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 16346 171523Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-06

INR-07 LAB-03 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 SAM-01 ACDA-10

TRSE-00 CIEP-02 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-03 L-02 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DRC-01 /102 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5695

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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TAGS: ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO VETTER'S ATTACK ON AMERICAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

REF: BONN 16237

1. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, THE FRG PRESS WAS VERY
CRITICAL OF DGB PRESIDENT VETTER'S SPEECH BEFORE THE
PRINTERS UNION CONVENTION (REFTEL), IN WHICH HE ACCUSED
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PAGE 02 BONN 16346 171523Z

THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF USING DIPLOMATS,

MONEY AND THREATS TO FIGHT MITBESTIMMUNG.END SUMMARY.-

2. PAPERS REACTING NEGATIVELY TO VETTER INCLUDE DIE WELT, STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG, WESTDEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE, AND THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG. NOTING A DECLINE IN US INVESTMENTS IN THE FRG, DIE WELT FOUND "VETTER'S CRITICISM TO BE DOUBLY OUT OF PLACE". THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG OBSERVED THAT EITHER THE LEGISLATORS OR THE COURTS WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE IF CODETERMINATION VIOLATED PROPERTY RIGHTS AND FOUND NO REASON TO COMPARE "THE DEMARCHE OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER WITH THE DEPLOYMENT OF GUN BOATS." IN THE OPINION OF THE WESTDEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE, THE GERMAN-AMERICAN TRADE ACT PROVIDES FOR COMPENSATION IN CASE OF EXPROPRIATION OF AMERICAN PROPERTY, WHICH IS NOT FORBIDDEN. THIS PAPER OBSERVED THAT COMPARATIVELY FAR REACHING SOCIAL LEGISLATION IN THE FRG HAD NOT PREVENTED AMERICAN FIRMS FROM INVESTING IN WEST GERMANY WHERE THEY HAD BENEFITED FROM THE HIGH DEGREE OF SOCIAL STABILITY. THE ALLGEMEINE SAW THE USE OF STRONG LANGUAGE BY US FIRMS AS LEGITIMATE AND "NO REASON FOR VETTER TO SPEAK OF A BANANA REPUBLIC." NOTING THAT A DECISION OF A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY MUST NOT BE THWARTED BY A VETO FROM FOREIGN ECONOMIC CIRCLES, THE ALLGEMEINE SAID "WHO INVESTS ABROAD MUST FOLLOW THE RULES OF THE HOST COUNTRY OR WITHDRAW WITH COMPENSATION." BUT THAT FOREIGN FIRMS WOULD HARDLY WITHDRAW AS LONG AS THERE IS A CHANCE TO EARN GOOD MONEY IN THE FRG.

3. ESPECIALLY HARSH WAS THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE, WHICH ACCUSED THE DGB OF OBVIOUSLY DECIDING TO ABANDON OBJECTIVITY IN THE DISPUTE ON PARITY MITBESTIMMUNG. "WHEN PRESIDENT VETTER DENOUNCES FOREIGN INVESTORS FOR REVIVING COLONIALISM AND PRACTICING PRE-CAPITALISM CHUZPA AND MAKES COMPARISON WITH SENDING GUN BOATS TO THE COLONIES AS IN THE PAST CENTURIES, THEN THE LOWEST LEVEL OF POLITICAL POLEMICS HAS BEEN REACHED."

4. SOMEWHAT SYMPATHETIC WAS THE FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU WHICH FOUND "VETTER'S CONCERN NOT UNFOUNDED." UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 BONN 16346 171523Z

CONTINUED THE RUNDSCHAU, SHOULD THE LEGAL OPINION, COMMISSIONED BY THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BE SUSTAINED PROSPECTS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE OF MITBESTIMMUNG WOULD BE VERY UNFAVORABLE. FOREIGN INVESTORS WOULD THEN HAVE MORE RIGHTS THAN DOMESTIC INVESTORS, WHICH WOULD BE ILLOGICAL. IF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC SHOULD BE PREVENTED FROM INSTITUTING MITBESTIMMUNG BY AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY--THEN THE TREATY SHOULD BE RE-

NEGOTIATED.
HILLENBRAND

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